

RECEIVED

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL  
RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION

JUL 16 2007

Ravalli County Commissioners



BRIAN SCHWEITZER, GOVERNOR

STATE OF MONTANA

Telephone: (406) 542-4200  
FAX: (406) 542-4285

July 13, 2007

SOUTHWESTERN LAND OFFICE  
1401 27th Avenue  
Missoula, Montana 59804-3199NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS  
DNRC/CB RANCH Land Exchange

The State of Montana; Department of Natural Resources & Conservation (DNRC) and THE CB Ranch are evaluating a proposed land exchange in Ravalli County.

The proposal is to exchange approximately 640 acres owned by the State of Montana, for approximately 1,280 acres of forested lands owned by the CB Ranch. CB Ranch wishes to acquire State section 36, T4N-R21W adjacent to their ranch property. This is a classified forest parcel without legal public access or access for land management purposes. In exchange, the State would receive two sections of land in the Rye and Cameron Creek drainages. The first parcel is section 25, T3N-R19W located immediately north of State Trust Land in the Sula State Forest. The second parcel offered is section 1, T3N-R20W. This parcel is adjacent to an existing Trust Land section along the north fork of Rye Creek.

This exchange is one component in the culmination of nearly 20 years of effort by community leaders, elected officials and conservation groups to deal with the railroad land grant checkerboard pattern in Rye Creek. With support from the community, Senator Burns appropriated funds for the Bitterroot National Forest to purchase the majority of the former Darby Lumber Company lands. The remaining lands have been purchased by the CB Ranch and are proposed for exchange with DNRC and the Forest Service. These exchanges will provide consolidation of public land, resulting in enhanced public access and more efficient land management.

A public hearing will be held at the USDA Forest Supervisors Office in Hamilton located at 1801 North First on July 25, 2007 at 7 p.m. This hearing will explain the exchange proposal and provide an opportunity for additional public comment.

In addition to the public hearings; DNRC will be accepting public comment on the Environmental Assessment (EA) documents prepared for these projects. A Copy of the EA is available on the DNRC website at [dnrc.mt.gov/env\\_docs/july/cbranch.pdf](http://dnrc.mt.gov/env_docs/july/cbranch.pdf). Comments will be accepted until August 1, 2007. Comments should be addressed to the DNRC contact listed below.

The DNRC will utilize comments received to help identify issues and the appropriate level of environmental analysis necessary for the proposed land exchange. Please send written comments to:

Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation  
Attn: Liz Mullins  
1401 27<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Missoula, MT 59804  
Telephone: (406) 542-4345  
Comments must be received by August 1, 2007.

Does  
B.C.C.  
wish to  
make  
comment?